MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

STUDENT ID NO

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FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 2, 2018/2019 SESSION

PEN0045 - COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH

(All groups)

11 MARCH 2019
9.00-11.00 AM
(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT

1. This question paper consists of 9 pages with 2 sections only.
2. Answer **ALL** questions.
3. Write all your answers in the answer booklet.

SECTION A: READING AND VOCABULARY [30 MARKS]

Instructions: Read the passages and answer all the questions.

Text 1 (15 marks)

Are Paper Books Really Disappearing?

1 When Peter James **published** his novel *Host* on two floppy discs in 1993, he was ill-prepared for the "venomous backlash" that would follow. Journalists and fellow writers berated and condemned him; one reporter even **hauled** a personal computer and a generator out to the beach to demonstrate the ridiculousness of this new form of reading which requires one to carry many things along. Shortly after *Host*'s debut, James also issued a prediction that e-books would spike in popularity once they became as easy and enjoyable to read as printed books. Two decades later, James' *vision* is well on its way to being realised.

2 E-books have surged in popularity in recent years, but where they are headed and what effect this will ultimately have on the printed word is unknown. Are printed books destined to eventually join the ranks of clay tablets, scrolls and typewritten pages to be displayed in collectors' glass cases with other curious items of the distant past? If this is so, should we be concerned? Answers to these questions do not come easily, thanks to the variability in both e-reading trends and research findings on the effects that digital reading has on us. According to a survey conducted by Pew Research, half of American adults now own a tablet or an e-reader, and three in 10 adults read an e-book. Although printed books remain the most popular means of reading, e-books have made a **valiant** or bold effort at catching up over the past decade.

3 While no one can say with certainty what the future holds for paper books, Robert Stein, founder of the Institute for the Future of the Book and co-founder of Voyager and the Criterion Collection, believes that what is a plateau now will return to a steep incline one day. It will climb the popularity chart very fast once there are more people switch to e-books. "We are in a transitional period," he says. "The affordances of screen reading will continuously improve and expand, offering people a reason to switch to screens." He also envisions that the distinction between writer and reader will be blurred by a social reading experience in which authors and consumers can digitally interact with each other to discuss any passage, sentence or line. Indeed, his latest project, Social Book, allows members to insert comments directly into digital book texts and is already used by teachers at several high schools and universities to **stimulate** discussions. This way, teachers can encourage the shy students to open up and insert their comments without having to do it orally. Thus, online discussions may become lively and energised.

4 Looking at the influence of e-books today, Stein believes that the eventual and total demise of print is inevitable, though such a day will not arrive for perhaps 50 to 100 or more years. "It will get harder and harder to understand why anyone

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would print something that is heavy, hard to ship and not customisable," he says. A printed copy is definitely rigid, and cannot be altered according to an individual's specifications.

5 Even though the death of printed books will come one day, the books themselves will not disappear entirely anytime soon. Like woodblock printing, hand-processed film and folk weaving, a printed book may carry an **aesthetic** value which people admire for its beauty and attractiveness. "Print will exist, but it will be in a different realm and will appeal to a very limited audience, like poetry does today," Stein says.

6 Maryanne Wolf, director of the Centre for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University in Massachusetts, also shares her concerns about the disappearing of printed books and the emerging of e-books. According to Wolf and others' research findings, electronic reading can negatively impact the way the brain responds to text, including reading comprehension, focus and the ability to maintain attention to details like plot and sequence of events. "A lot of people are worried that our ability to enter into the story is changing," Wolf says. "My worry is that we will have a short-circuited reading brain, excellent for gathering information but not necessarily for forming critical, analytical, deep reading skills."

7 The field, however, is in its infancy, and findings about the negative impacts of e-reading are far from chiselled in stone. In fact, some studies have produced opposite results, especially for readers with dyslexia. Apparently, their reading comprehension is enhanced by using e-books. Findings are also mixed for how digital reading affects children. Illustrated children's e-books often include enhancements, including movement, music and sound, but the effect these additions have on reading varies, depending on how they are executed. "If done well, they can be a kind of guide for children," says Wolf. In several experiments involving more than four hundred kindergarteners, she found that children who read animated e-books understood the story better and learned more vocabulary than those who read static ones. "For young children, written language is often difficult, but animated pictures can help them understand more difficult parts of the text," she says.

8 In light of this, she hopes that we continue to maintain a "bi-literate" society – one that values both the digital and printed word. The recent **uptick** in the number of independent bookstores gives her encouragement that others, too, are recognising the value of print. "The rise of the bookstores shows that people are still focused on reading. A full reading brain circuit is one of the most important contributions to the intellectual development of our species," she says.

Adapted from Nuwer, R. (2016, January 25). *Are paper books really disappearing?* Retrieved from http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20160124-are-paper-books-really-disappearing

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Part 1: Contextual Clues (5 marks)

Instructions: Based on the passage, provide a word or a phrase that best expresses each of the following words.

Example:

	Word published	Line (line 1)	Meaning printed
a.	hauled	(line 3)	
b.	valiant	(line 18)	
c.	stimulate	(line 31)	
d.	aesthetic	(line 42)	
e.	uptick	(line 68)	

Part 2: True-False Statements (5 marks)

Instructions: For each statement, write (TRUE) if the statement is true and (FALSE) if the statement is false.

a. In a survey conducted by Pew Research, half of the American population possess a tablet or an e-reader.

b. Currently, most e-books allow members such as teachers and students to have discussions digitally by inserting comments.

c. Printed books will disappear in the near future as everyone will use an e-reader.

d. Unlike printed books, e-books can help enhance reading comprehension for dyslexics.

e. We are encouraged to be a "bi-literate" society who appreciates both the digital and the printed word.

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Part 3: Comprehension (5 marks)

Instructions: Read the passage above and answer all the following questions.

a. What does *"vision"* in line 8 refer to? (1 mark)

b. How does electronic reading affect the brain negatively? (2 marks)

c. State the benefits of animated e-books on children's literacy. (2 marks)

Text 2 (15 marks)

Why Walking on Legos Hurts More than Walking on Fire or Ice

1 In 2006, Scott Bell earned a spot in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for the longest-ever barefoot walk over 76 metres of glowing hot coals, at 648 degrees Celsius. Now, he **runs** an events company in the United Kingdom, guiding other people over hot coals and the occasional bed of broken glass as part of corporate team-building exercises and charity events. However, Bell usually gets someone else in his team to do another team-building exercise which is walking just two metres over 2,000 Lego pieces. He tells people all the time that walking on Legos actually hurts more than walking on broken glass.

2 Lego, the stackable plastic brick that we all know, debuted in 1958. Lego consists of colourful interlocking plastic bricks accompanying an array of gears, figurines called *Minifigures*, and various other parts. Lego pieces can be **assembled** and connected in many ways to construct objects including vehicles, buildings, and working robots. Anything constructed of the Lego pieces can then be taken apart again, and the pieces are used to make other objects. People who are around small children have experienced the painful shock of stepping on a stray Lego barefoot. Why does Lego-walking hurt while fire-walking and glass-walking do not? The science of physics and anatomy offer some clues.

3 Bell says that for fire-walking, he and his team use hardwood logs, letting them burn down for about 45 minutes to an hour, until they are just embers. Though the coals will give a temperature reading of between 500 and 600 degrees Celsius, it is not the level of heat one feels when walking over them. Hot coals are very slow conductors of heat, and the time the foot is in contact with them is too little to cause damage. This is not to say that there is no risk of burning. Bell says that he **endured** serious blisters when he did his first world record walk.

4 Glass-walking, which looks incredibly painful and is perhaps most similar to Lego-walking, can actually be relatively painless. To prepare a glass walk, the pieces are typically broken to fairly small size, then poured onto the flat surface and patted down to ensure a more uniform walking surface. Once the walker steps on to the path, the glass shifts and flattens further, and the walker is distributing his or her

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weight evenly over many potentially sharp points, similar to the "*bed of nails*" effect. This means that no one piece has enough pressure applied to break the skin or even set off the many pain receptive nerves in the feet.

5 Legos are built from acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) plastic, an extremely hard and **durable** thermoplastic polymer. They are built to survive intense levels of abuse without shattering. A single two-by-two brick can withstand up to 4,240 Newtons, an unbelievable amount of pressure. That is equivalent to a mass of around 430 kilogrammes, and it would take 375,000 other bricks stacked 4 kilometres high on top to exert the same kind of pressure.

6 When stepping on a single Lego brick, with its sharp corners and pointy bits, there is nowhere for the force to go except back into your very sensitive foot. Despite the fact that we are standing on them all the time, feet are, along with hands and lips, among the most sensitive areas on our bodies, instantly reactive to painful stimuli. The bottom of each foot is packed with up to 200,000 individual sensory receptors, constantly sending information back to our brains and allowing us to unconsciously adjust our **gaits,** or the way we walk, as needed.

7 That is why it hurts to step on just one Lego brick. It hurts less to step on many at one time because it is no longer all that pressure applied to a single point, but rather shared over many points. It still **stings** because unlike with glass, which helpfully shifts and adjusts under your feet, achieving an even weight distribution over Lego bricks is unlikely because they do not flatten.

8 "Glass will move as you stand on it, whereas Lego, will sort of stand proud and refuse to go down," says Bell. This also explains why children seem to be able to better withstand the Lego-walk pain, something that parents the world over have already clocked, simply because they weigh less and therefore are applying less pressure.

Adapted from McRobbie, L. R. (2018, November 13). Why walking on Legos hurts more than walking on fire or ice. *Smithsonian Magazine.* Retrieved from https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/why-walking-legos-hurts-more-walking-fire-or-ice

Part 1: Comprehension (9 marks)

Instructions: Read the passage above and answer all the following questions.

a. Who is Scott Bell and what does he do for a living? (2 marks)

b. According to the text, what do you do with Lego bricks? (1 mark)

c. Describe the process of preparing a bed of hot embers for fire-walking and a bed of broken glass for glass-walking. (2 marks)

d. Explain the "*bed of nails*" effect (line 30). (2 marks)

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e. What is the main idea of paragraph 6? (1 mark)

f. Why does stepping on a Lego brick cause more pain on adults than children? (1 mark)

Part 2: Synonym and Antonym (6 marks)

Instructions: For each question, choose the best answer.

a. Now, he **runs** an events company in the United Kingdom, guiding other people over hot coals and the occasional bed of broken glass as part of corporate team-building exercises and charity events.

Which of the following is the best synonym for "runs"?
A. fuses
B. bears
C. handles

b. Lego pieces can be **assembled** and connected in many ways to construct objects including vehicles, buildings, and working robots.

Which of the following is the best antonym for "assembled"?
A. severed
B. departed
C. detached

c. This is not to say that there is no risk of burning. Bell says that he **endured** serious blisters when he did his first world record walk.

Which of the following is the best synonym for "endured"?
A. allowed
B. suffered
C. encountered

d. Legos are built from acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) plastic, an extremely hard and **durable** thermoplastic polymer.

Which of the following is the best antonym for "durable"?
A. flimsy
B. exhausted
C. short-lived

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e. The bottom of each foot is packed with up to 200,000 individual sensory receptors, constantly sending information back to our brains and allowing us to unconsciously adjust our **gaits**, or the way we walk, as needed.

Which of the following is the best synonym for "gaits"?
A. steps
B. moments
C. instabilities

f. It still **stings** because unlike with glass, which helpfully shifts and adjusts under your feet, achieving an even weight distribution over Lego bricks is unlikely because they do not flatten.

Which of the following is the best antonym for "stings"?
A. relaxes
B. ravishes
C. comforts

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SECTION B: GRAMMAR [20 MARKS]

Part 1: Subject-verb Agreement (10 marks)

Instructions: The following extract contains 10 errors of Subject-Verb Agreement. Identify the errors and correct them as shown in the example.

Example:	Line	Error	Correction
	1	have	has

A Full-Throated Defence of Traditional Indian Cooking

1 Something **have** been missing from New York's current Indian restaurant scene, but I was not sure what it was until I ate the *kaleji masala* at Adda Indian Canteen in Long Island City, Queens. Unifying many of the Indian restaurants, modernisation is the theme that have taken root around the city over the past few years. Unfortunately, authentic and traditional Indian cuisine has been dying slowly from the competitive world of modern cooking where fusion, along with western influence, are making a stamp on the cuisine.

2 Sometimes, to get the original dishes require one to search the less popular New York street where hawkers carry their goods. It may seem simple to put the snacks together, but preparing the snacks at folding tables and rolling carts by the hawkers prove to be a long process which begins literally from home. The keepers of the culinary flame, known collectively as the aunties, patiently prepared the gravy-soaked stews and dry curries made from twenty-five vegetables and seasonings. All the vegetables were chopped, ground, fried and simmered by hand from scratch. Thus, it is a two-tier process where the aunties diligently prepares everything at home first, and then the hawkers peddle the food by the street. Indeed, new places cooking the genuine cuisine has been scarce.

3 There is a problem of missing context here. Twists on tradition does not really resonate when tradition is hard to find in its untwisted form. Furthermore, for anyone who truly love Indian cooking, there is a more pressing problem of missing flavour. Tandoori-spice oil decorated on a plate is not the same as the impact of a full plate of charred and steaming tandoori chicken.

4 I had not given much thought to either problem, to tell the truth, until I made it to the Long Island City where Adda Indian Canteen operates. Once I had found it, one of the first things I ate were the *kaleji masala* - chicken livers in a dark gravy seasoned with fresh ginger and Indian spices. Right away, I realised that this was the kind of Indian food the city has been hungry for: made with care but no pretense, seasoned for people who enjoys the interplay of spices, presented without apology, and complex in ways that demand full attention.

Adapted from Wells, P. (2018, November 20). *A full-throated defense of traditional Indian cooking.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/20/dining/adda-indian-canteen-review.html

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Part 2: Verb Tenses (10 marks)

Instructions: Write the appropriate usage of tenses for the words in brackets.

Example: Each boy (0) **sat** (sit) behind a laptop computer, ears warmed by a bulky headset.

Video Games Are a Waste of Time? Not for Those with E-sports Scholarships

Behind a glass partition at the Microsoft store at the Roosevelt Field Mall on Long Island, ten teenage boys settled into seats in a rectangular formation. Each boy (0) **sat** (sit) behind a laptop computer, ears warmed by a bulky headset. Supportive parents and grandparents (1) _____ (circle) the room, peering over shoulders at screens. One mother used her iPhone to live-stream to social media.

The room (2) _____ (have) the feel of a sporting event, and it was. A group of competitive video gamers on the Bay Shore High School e-sports team (3) _____ (compete) in a scrimmage and playing their way towards college scholarships. Multiplayer video games played competitively, often with spectators, are known as e-sports, and they have become a gateway to college scholarship money. Over the past two years, the National Association of Collegiate E-sports, which is engaged with 98 varsity programmes across the United States and Canada, (4) _____ (help) to facilitate $16 million in scholarships, according to the executive director, Michael Brooks.

In higher education, e-sports can commonly be found in various departments. Sometimes, they (5) _____ (be) part of student affairs. Some schools place them within an engineering or design programme, and more rarely, they have their place in athletics. At Robert Morris University Illinois (RMUI), e-sports is part of the athletics department. Although it is only e-sports, team members (6) _____ (undergo) light fitness training once admitted. During practice, players (7) _____ (analyse) game videos intensively. Apart from participating in team-building activities, they are also required to sit for communication sessions.

The founder of e-sports scholarship in RMUI is Kurt Melcher. A few years out of college, Melcher (8) _____ (be) the soccer coach and associate athletic director for RMUI. By 2013, he noticed a new college community emerging. Students were organising themselves, and creating their own opportunities for gaming and competitions. Consequently, he (9) _____ (take) a proposal to the university administration: What if game play were an athletic endeavour?

Today, about eighty of RMUI students (10) _____ (receive) e-sports scholarships, Melcher said. Varsity-level players can receive scholarships that cover up to 70 per cent of their tuition, and reserve players receive 35 per cent tuition coverage.

Adapted from Dollinger, A. (2018, November 2). *Video games are a waste of time? Not for those with e-sports scholarships*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/02/education/learning/video-games-esports-scholarships.html

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